

# Small Business Partnerships Grant Program

Office of Small Business Partnerships

# Objectives of this Program

- To support the start-up, growth, and success of Minnesota's entrepreneurs and small business owners through the delivery of high quality free or low-cost professional business development and technical assistance services
- Proposals are actively encouraged from organizations that serve targeted populations and/or business types that include, but are not limited to, businesses owned by Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC) individuals, veteran, women, persons with disabilities, technology-based businesses, and entrepreneurs and businesses located in Greater Minnesota

# Agenda

- I. Timeline
- II. Goals and Objectives of the Grant Program
- III. RFP Details
- IV. Proposal Format and Submission
- V. Evaluation of Proposals and Awards
- VI. Receiving and Managing a State Grant
- VII. Monitoring and Reporting

# Timeline

- August 11 RFP Release
- August 17 Information Session
- September 10 Deadline for Questions
- September 15 Proposal Submission Deadline
- September Award Notification
- October Contracts Executed

# Available Funding

- Grant awards are for October 2021 through June 30, 2023
- The maximum award is \$600,000 for the performance period
- A total of \$9,528,750 is available for grants
- Estimated number of awards: 18-28
- No minimum match. Match encouraged and impacts evaluation score
- The proposal budget request will be for the entire performance period, not broken out by year

# Eligibility

- Non-profit organizations or public entities that provide business development and assistance services to entrepreneurs and small businesses in Minnesota
- Proposals are actively encouraged from organizations that serve targeted populations and/or business types that include, but are not limited to, businesses owned by Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC) individuals, veteran, women, persons with disabilities, technology-based businesses, and entrepreneurs and businesses located in Greater Minnesota

# Allowable Expenses

- Expenses directly related to delivering grant objectives can include personnel, fringe benefits, travel, equipment, supplies, and contractual
- Expenses not directly related to delivering grant objectives but necessary to support this grant funded program can include administrative cost
- No more than 10% of the total grant funds can be dedicated to administrative cost.
- Ineligible expenses, both direct and administrative, include but are not limited to:
  - Fundraising
  - Taxes, except sales tax on goods and services
  - Lobbyists, political contributions
  - Bad debts, late payment fees, finance charges, or contingency funds
  - Parking or traffic violations
  - Out of state transportation and travel expenses, (Minnesota will be considered the home state for determining whether travel is out of state).

# Collaboration and Matching

- Programmatic partnerships and collaborations between organizations are eligible and encouraged to apply. The proposal must identify a lead fiscal agent who is responsible for the administration of the grant
- Cannot “collude” with other Responders to the RFP
- The budget should identify the sources of any project matching dollars
- Proposals must also identify the dollar amount and percentage of state money involved in the total project cost



# Proposals Format

- Cover Page
- One Page Executive Summary
- Narrative Sections *(double spaced, 11 point Calibri, max 15 pages)*.
  - Organizational Capacity and Relevant Experience
  - Project Description, Design, and Methods
  - Work plan
  - Community Engagement and Communications
  - Partnerships, Collaboration, and Community Support
  - Performance and Evaluation
  - Budget and Matching
- Required Attachments (see RFP Checklist)

# Evaluation of Proposals

- Reviewed, scored, and ranked by on a panel of subject matter experts and community reviewers who will provide a recommendation to the Commissioner of DEED for final review and awards decisions.
- Scoring is on a 100 point scale with points available as follows:
  - Organizational Capacity and Relevant Experience (15 points)
  - Project Description, Design, and Methods (20 points)
  - Work plan (20 points)
  - Community Engagement and Communications (15 points)
  - Partnerships, Collaboration, and Community Support (10 points)
  - Performance and Evaluation (10 points)
  - Budget and Matching (10 points)

# Cover Letter and Executive Summary

- Provides organizational information
- Summarizes proposal
- Required but not scored separately from the narrative

# Organizational Capacity and Relevant Experience

- What is your organization's experience providing assistance to entrepreneurs?
- What are the qualifications of staff to provide services at the scale proposed?
- Do you have the capacity to deliver culturally and linguistically relevant services for the proposed client base?
- Is the proposed project consistent with the size and capacity of your organization?

# Project Description, Design, and Methods

- What is the need for the project?
- What is the service delivery model?
- What services will be provided?
- Who will be served?

# Community Engagement and Communications

- What is the plan to raise awareness and reach the project's targeted groups?
- What is the process through which clients request, sign-up, and receive services from your organization?
- What outreach strategies, tactics and tools will your organization use to reach the intended audiences of this project?

- What are key activities?
- What is the time table for completion of major project goals?

# Partnerships, Collaboration, and Community Support

- Who are the key collaborators and partners?
- What are the roles, responsibilities, and commitments of each collaborator/partner?



# Performance, Evaluation, and Reporting

- How much will organization do?
  - # of businesses served
  - Types and quantity of services provided
  - Hours of service
- What will be the outcomes those efforts?
  - The number of jobs created/retained
  - The average wage of the jobs created/retained
  - The number of new business formations
- How will performance be tracked and reported on?

# Budget and Matching

- Total budget request is for the entire performance period
- Match is not required but to receive maximum amount of points must match at least 50% of the request
- Request should be consistent the scale and capacity of your organization to meet the program objectives

# Other Required Documents

- Conflict of Interest Disclosure
- Affidavit of Non-collusion
- Financial Review Documents
  - Grant applicants with annual income of under \$50,000, or who have not been in existence long enough to have a completed IRS Form 990 or audit should submit their most recent board-reviewed financial statements.
  - Grant applicants with total annual revenue of \$50,000 or more and less than \$750,000 should submit their most recent IRS Form 990.
  - Grant applicants with total annual revenue of over \$750,000 should submit their most recent certified financial audit.

# Submitting the Proposal

- Proposals Due: 4:00 p.m., September 15, 2021
- PDF Format with max file size of 25mb
- Emailed to: [MNSBP.DEED@state.mn.us](mailto:MNSBP.DEED@state.mn.us)
- Late submissions will not be reviewed

# Award Determinations

- The Commissioner of DEED will review all panel recommendations and is responsible for award decisions
- The award decisions of DEED are final and not subject to appeal
- The Commissioner of DEED reserves the right to change the amount awarded to any selected project
- Award determinations will be made by end of September
- Projects can not start until contracts are executed

# Receiving an Award

- If you are awarded a grant....
  - Receive an official award letter with the final award amount
  - Submit an updated work plan/budget if the final award is different from the request
  - Receive, review, and sign the grant contract and send to DEED
  - Receive an executed grant, a payment request form with instructions and begin your project!
  - Participate in the payment request, monitoring, reporting and close out process
- All grants funds are dispersed on a reimbursement basis

# Questions

- Email questions to [MNSBP.DEED@state.mn.us](mailto:MNSBP.DEED@state.mn.us) by September 10
- All questions and answers will be published in a FAQ and posted at <https://mn.gov/deed/about/contracts/open-rfp.jsp>
- FAQ will be updated regularly